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SECURITY INFORMATION

75885

3 February 1953

Mr. Raymond P. Whearty
Chairman, Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security
2107 Department of Justice

Subject: Re National Intelligence Estimate on Certain
Soviet Capabilities

Dear Mr. Whearty:

In response to your letter of 21 January (ICIS-P25/122), I am proposing to the Intelligence Advisory Committee the initiation of a National Intelligence Estimate on the lines you request. This will require an initial appraisal of the technological possibilities, followed by a study of Soviet agent capabilities for introduction of weapon components, together with an appraisal of Soviet capabilities for assembly and detonation of weapons once introduced.

Every effort will be made to produce this estimate by 15 March, if this meets with your requirement. In any event, matters of scope and deadlines will be up for discussion when the IAC agencies are asked to consider this problem. I have asked our Office of National Estimates to notify you of this meeting so that you can be represented.

I should like to call your attention to the connection between this proposal and the NSC 140 project for a new summary evaluation of the net capability of the USSR to injure the continental United States. The Edwards Subcommittee, on which ICIE and this agency will both be represented, will also need this estimate for its work, and I urge that you use the CIA representative on this committee as a direct channel for discussion of the progress and scope of this estimate. With particular reference to your request that the estimate cover the degree of threat from clandestine attack in relation to military attack, I doubt whether this question could be satisfactorily answered without a better picture than the intelligence community now has of the possible effectiveness of Soviet military attack. This point will be developed during the work of the Edwards Subcommittee and I suggest that you postpone consideration of it until the subcommittee's work is well advanced.

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I have noted the recommendation on page 10 of the Special Committee report, to which you call my attention in your closing paragraph. We are referring this matter to the Interdepartmental Priorities Committee which is charged with setting intelligence priorities.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

LOFTUS E. RECHER
Deputy Director/Intelligence

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SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE RE SE-36

1. The Navy's attitude with respect to Part II reflects a policy, previously observed, to prevent any emphasis on either Soviet or US atomic warfare capabilities, as being advantageous to the Air Force (disadvantageous to the Navy) in inter-Service budgetary rivalry. Unable to object to Part I, the Navy has concentrated its fire on Part II. Its representative wanted that Part expanded to include either an estimate that a Soviet atomic attack on the US was unlikely or an estimate of Soviet global strategy in the event of general war which would de-emphasize direct attack on the US. Such matters are beyond the scope of the problem presented.

2. The State representative tended to support the Navy on this issue, but the attitude of [REDACTED] is not indicated.

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